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THE POLITICAL ORIGINS OF HALLIBURTON

BY JEFFREY ST CLAIR

Halliburton, the signature corporation of the Bush-Cheney onslaught on Iraq, didn't start its corporate life on the government dole. In fact, the company patriarch, Erle P. "Red" Halliburton, despised the federal government. His distaste for Uncle Sam was matched only by his ferocious hatred of Mexicans, blacks and labor unionists.

In 1919, Red Halliburton started the New Method Oil Well Cementing Company from his home in Wilson, Oklahoma, a hardscrabble town in the oil patch. Halliburton's big innovation was something called the Cement Jet Mixer. When the oil boom hit Texas, the wildcatters and other drillers quickly began experiencing problems with their deep shafts. The steel pipe funneling the oil up from the Permian basin and other reservoirs of crude would sooner or later develop cracks, allowing groundwater to contaminate the crude. In some cases, the pipes would even explode.

Halliburton's solution, which he unveiled in the oil town of Burkburnett, Texas, was to seal the well-pipes in a sheath of concrete, protecting the pipes from corrosion and precious loads of crude from contamination. He was soon in demand across the oil fields of Texas and Oklahoma. Erle changed the name of the company to Halliburton and raked in millions from his patent. Halliburton continues to garner millions from its drilling technology, from Saudi Arabia to the Amazonian rainforest.

Meanwhile, in that same crucial year of 1919, the other half of Halliburton was also beginning to take shape as two friends from San Marcos, Texas, Herman Brown and Dan Root, formed a road paving company that would eventually become one

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Bolivia's Third Revolution

BY NEWTON GARVER

During the past month there has been an intense combination of turmoil and opportunity in Bolivia. The news reports have sometimes compared these recent events with those of October 2003, but the differences are significant and this year's crisis cannot be resolved as easily as that of 2003. The main event in 2005 is a power play by the Indians of Bolivia, led by the Aymara, but there is also a counter power play by entrepreneurs of Santa Cruz. The events of 2003 are indeed part of the prelude, but we cannot understand what is happening without taking note of the centuries of Spanish oppression, the earlier revolutions of 1952 and 1982, and differences between 2003 and 2005.

The Spaniards treated all of the Indians of South America as slaves, and people of European ancestry continue to compose the elite of Bolivia and to hold the reigns of power, even though indigenous people constitute between 65% and 70% of the population. The Indians were never content with their subjugation, but it is only since 1952 that there has been steady progress toward overcoming it.

During the 1940s several leftist-oriented political parties were organized. The most important of these was the Nationalist Revolutionary Movement (Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario, or MNR), founded by young nationalist intellectuals and headed by Victor Paz Estenssoro, an economist and one-time close adviser to a previous president. The MNR opposed the power of the big mining companies and advocated freeing the Indian people from exploitation. In 1943, the MNR led a successful coup, encouraged unionization of tin mines, and tried to improve Indian living conditions. These efforts brought con-

flict with the tin barons, culminating in a bloody uprising in La Paz in 1946, and for the next six years the government remained in the hands of conservatives.

In 1951, even though exiled in Argentina, Victor Paz won nearly half the presidential election vote. To prevent his installation, the government was placed under the control of a military junta. In 1952, a revolution by the MNR and the miners put him in the presidency, and the MNR began its program of profound social, economic, and political changes. It pledged to make the Indians full-fledged members of the national community, to free the country from control of the largely foreign-owned mining companies, to develop the economy, and to bring about real political democracy.

The MNR regime acted quickly. Beginning in August 1952 it extended the vote to all adults, legalized the formation of labor unions, and nationalized the major tin-mining companies. A year later, through its land reform law, it broke up the estates of the large landlords and transferred ownership of the small plots to Indian farmers (campesinos). It began extensive projects for education and founded medical clinics in the countryside and farm cooperatives among the peasants. The second MNR president, Hernán Siles Zuazo, came into office in 1956, and Victor Paz was returned to the presidency in 1960.

Prior to 1952, it was barely legal for Indians to attend independent schools. For example, Quakers began missionary work among the Indians in Bolivia in the 1920s, and helped them establish schools beginning in the 1930s, but these first schools had to be clandestine. When the Constitution of 1952 was promulgated the number

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of the world's largest construction firms. The Brown & Root Co. shared Halliburton's antipathy toward organized labor, but realized early on that there was a fortune to be made through outsourced government work.

Brown & Root also understood that government contracts are a lot easier to get if you have a politician on retainer. In the late winter of 1937, the imperious Texas Congressman James P. "Bucky" Buchanan, chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, suddenly died in office. Buchanan departed the living with some unfinished business of extreme importance to his political cronies. The congressman, who controlled the federal purse, was in the midst of pushing through congress the Lower Colorado River Project, a scheme to build a network of dams across the Texas hill country that would bring water to the people and millions in federal funds to favored contractors. The centerpiece of this enterprise was the Marshall Ford Dam outside Austin, and the company that had won the contract to build the dam was none other than Brown & Root.

The \$10 million dam deal was the biggest Brown & Root contract to date. But there were two problems left by Buchanan's ill-timed passing: the money for the dam hadn't yet been approved by congress and the land at the dam-site wasn't owned by the federal government. What had suddenly looked like a sure thing, now found Brown

& Root on the unnerving verge of bankruptcy. The company had gone into debt by more than \$1.5 million in order to purchase the equipment needed to build the dam.

Brown & Root decided there was no turning back. They began construction on the dam before getting any federal funds and before the feds had actually acquired the land from the state of Texas.

But the company had an ace in the hole in the shape of Lyndon Baines Johnson, the lumbering former schoolteacher who was vying to replace the departed Buchanan. In the spring of that year, young LBJ met several times with Herman Brown, vowing to make congressional approval of the dam project his top priority. Brown sluiced cash into LBJ's campaign, and the latter sailed to victory in a special election on May 13, 1937. LBJ lived up to his obligations. A little more than a week after having arrived in DC, the freshly hatched congressman had engineered congressional approval for both the appropriation and the land purchase.

The Marshall Ford Dam deal launched LBJ's career as a can-do politician without parallel in American politics and it set Brown & Root on course to become one of the federal government's favorite contractors. The apex political fixer Thomas "Tommy the Cork" Corcoran later observed that "LBJ's whole world was built on that dam". So too was Brown & Root's.

LBJ had the good fortune to land on the congressional committee overseeing the operations of the U.S. Navy as it prepared for WW II. When LBJ's fortunes rose on the Hill, so did Brown & Root's. As a brawny member of the Naval Affairs Committee, the ambitious congressman, then a key southern supporter of FDR's New Deal, steered as many big contracts to his political financiers as possible.

It was courtesy of LBJ and his privileged position in the congress that Brown & Root got into the Pentagon contracting business in a big way. In 1940, the former road-paving firm won a huge contract to build the Corpus Christi Naval Air Station, a complex of runways, hangars, barracks and command centers sprawling across 2,000 acres of swamp and scrubland on the gulf coast of Texas. It was a model for things to come.

The Corpus Christi Naval Air Station was one of the first "cost-plus" contracts, a sweet deal where the government simply pays every bill the contractor submits. The initial price-tag was pegged at \$23.5 million, with Brown & Root guaranteed a profit of \$1.2 million. But within a year, the cost had soared to more than \$45 million, with Brown

& Root pocketing more than \$2.4 million in profits. It was an early lesson in the demented logic of Pentagon contracting: the bigger the cost-overruns, the juicier the profits. In the end, the Naval Air Station cost the Pentagon more than \$125 million.

The Corpus Christi deal initiated Brown & Root into the risk-free fraternity of favored Pentagon contractors. The company that had prospered through the Great Depression thanks to federal dam projects was poised to make a killing from World War II, with most of the deal coming courtesy of the U.S. Navy and its congressional overlord LBJ and the powerful congressman from Houston, Albert Thomas. Working together, LBJ and Thomas convinced the Navy to give Brown & Root a lucrative shipbuilding contract, even though, as investigative reporter Robert Bryce notes, up until that point the company "had never built so much as a canoe."

But over the next five years, Brown Shipbuilding, a huge operation on the Houston Ship Channel, would build 355 ships for the Navy, specializing in sub chasers and escorts for destroyers. The company made a cool \$500 million from the deal.

As the war drew to a close, Brown & Root went from building ships to melting more than 20,000 surplus airplanes they bought on the cheap from the War Assets Administration. They were soon one of the big players in the aluminum business, much of which they sold right back to the feds, making tens of millions in profits. This neat trick was followed by a huge cost-plus contract to build the U.S. military base on Guam in the south Pacific, a deal that started out with a price tag of \$25 million but soon ballooned to more than \$250 million.

Never say that Brown & Root wasn't grateful. They knew that their fortunes rode on the backs of their political benefactors and they did their best to keep them happy. Unlike many others in Congress during the 1940s, Johnson wasn't rich. He and Lady Bird fretted about money during the early years of their marriage. Then, in the mid-1940s, opportunity came calling when KTBC, Austin's first radio station, went on the market. Using money from Lady Bird's inheritance and generous infusions of cash from Brown & Root, the Johnsons bought the station, made major upgrades in its operations and squeezed federal broadcast regulators into allowing it to expand its output and change its location to a more central place on the dial. Soon the Johnsons were rich. As LBJ said, "Finally, I was a millionaire". CP

(To be concluded in our next issue.)

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In Guatemala, the Dead Don't Let the Living Die

By JOHN ROSS

I do not know if you can live
with a dead person inside you,
you have to choose
between throwing it far away
or letting it infect you
so that you will not be able to die.

—Alaide Foppa

They had been hunting him for a long time, ever since they first heard that, like so many from their country, he was a fugitive in Mexico. They tracked down the address and found the house where he lived, a white-washed home on Chiapas Street in the comfortable subdivision of Las Jacarandas in Tlalnepantla, a suburb of the capital.

On the day Spain's top investigative court, the Audiencia Nacional, petitioned the Mexican government for the extradition of Donaldo Alvarez Ruiz, interior minister under the blood-drenched regime of General Romeo Lucas García (1978-82) for the crime of genocide, those who remembered his victims silently surrounded the house on Chiapas Street, waiting for the accused's next move. But Alvarez Ruiz, 73, had already made his next move. Tipped off by either Mexican or Spanish justice officials, he had flown the coop.

The list of crimes charged to Lucas García, Alvarez, and their associates casts them as Chapino versions of Adolph Eichmann. There is no doubt that the indicted had the clear intention of exterminating the Mayan people in their social, political, and religious reality, wrote Judge Fernando Grande Marlaska in issuing the extradition request to the Mexican government. After lengthy appeals, Ricardo Cavallo, thought responsible for "disappearing" thousands of Argentinean dissidents during the dirty war in the southern cone in the 1980s, was finally shipped off to Madrid where he is awaiting trial.

Under Lucas García's reign of blood, tens of thousands of Indian and Ladino farmers, workers, and students died or disappeared, including 34 leaders of left political parties and 16 journalists. Between

June and November of 1980, 3,000 were slaughtered, according to an Amnesty International "urgent action" request issued during that dark time.

In December of that year, while driving home to Guatemala to visit with her ailing mother, Alaide Foppa, an exile in Mexico ever since the U.S. CIA overthrew Arbenz, and founder of Latin America's first feminist magazine (she brought Susan Sontag and Kate Millet to Mexico) in addition to being a luminous poet whose lines grace this remembrance, simply disappeared somewhere south of the Suchiate river. Ironically, the Spanish government's extradition request for Alvarez Ruiz was

In the end, Alzheimer's is the next-to-last refuge of assassins.

issued almost exactly 24 years to the date Foppa vanished.

Perhaps the former interior minister's most heinous crime occurred on January 31, 1981, just about a month after Foppa's disappearance. A group of Mayan farmers from embattled Quiché province peacefully occupied the Spanish embassy in Guatemala City, seeking to draw international attention to Lucas García's savage repression in the mountains. Their story so moved Spanish Ambassador Maximo Cajal that he called the Interior Minister in an effort to mediate the dispute. An enraged Alvarez, accusing the ambassador of intervening in Guatemala's domestic affairs, ordered troops to storm the embassy. In the assault the building was set afire, killing 33 Indians and three embassy officials - 40 were seriously wounded, including Ambassador Cajal, and Spain angrily broke diplomatic relations with the Lucas regime.

Soon after this terrible conflagration, Irma Faquer, a journalist and founder of

Guatemala's first independent human rights commission, who had recorded Alvarez Ruiz's order to storm the embassy, was kidnapped, and like Foppa, has never reappeared.

Lucas García and Donaldo Alvarez are also charged in the National Audience indictment with the murders of four Spanish priests in the Guatemalan highlands between 1980 and 1981. It is the deaths of Spanish citizens in Guatemala during this bloody period that greenlights the Audiencia Nacional to seek extradition warrants for the alleged perpetrators.

But, in the end, the most significant victim of this period of intense repression was a simple Quiché farmer Vicente Menchu, whose daughters Rigoberta and Ana were not yet 20 when he was burned up in the embassy fire. In the next months, their mother Juana and brother Victor would be murdered by Alvarez's security forces. The traumatic events plunged the two sisters into the struggle for indigenous rights in Guatemala and, in 1992, the 500th anniversary of the European conquest of Indian America, Rigoberta was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize and has since become a distinguished voice for the vindication of Indians in the Americas.

Indeed, the Rigoberta Menchu Foundation played a key role in formulating the charges against Lucas García, Donaldo Alvarez, and their accomplices. In 1999, the Nobel laureate invited Spanish investigative judge Baltasar Garçon, who had just been rebuffed in his efforts to extradite former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet from London, to open an investigation into the Guatemalan holocaust in which upwards of 200,000, most of them indigenous people, had lost their lives under three distinct military dictatorships that held power between 1978 and 1986. Mass graves are still being uncovered in the highlands as forensic investigators try to match bone to name.

General Romeo Lucas García was elected Guatemalan president in 1978, the hand-picked successor to General Kjell Laugarud whom he served as defense minister. A Mayan Indian from Alta Verapaz, Lucas García's advance in the military was commensurate with the suppression of indigenous rebellion in the Guatemalan highlands. In addition to Alvarez, the National Audience seeks the extradition of El Indio Lucas, who has long lived in Venezuela. As with Pinochet, his lawyers
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of Quaker schools quickly multiplied until there were about 50 serving primarily Aymara youth. It was in 1952 that the Indians were first recognized as citizens and began to participate in the political life of their country.

During its years in power (1952-64), the MNR provided Bolivia with the most stable and open government in the country's history. The press was free to criticize the government and did so energetically. Government changes in 1956 and 1960 were the result of elections, although there were frequent crises and many attempts to oust the MNR. Victor Paz Estenssoro's second presidency was ended by a military coup in 1964, and the next eighteen years saw a succession of coups and juntas.

There was a second revolution in 1982. In 1980, General Luis García Meza seized power, suspended the constitution, and instituted a repressive regime. His opponents were arrested and killed, and many more fled abroad. The universities were closed. The army ousted García Meza in 1981, and moderate army leadership held power until former MNR president Hernán Siles Zuazo was installed by elections held in 1982. Presidential elections in 1985 returned Paz Estenssoro to the presidency. Since 1982, governments in Bolivia have been chosen by election with the participation of a wide range of political parties.

This did not produce proportional power for the indigenous peoples, since political parties and elections require experience and financial resources lacking to the Indian populace. The last MNR president, Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada, continued strengthening public education, but he is an advocate of capitalism and globalization, policies that conflict not only with dominant interests of the Indians but also with the economic policies of Victor Paz. He served as president from 1993 to 1997 and was re-elected in 2002 but then forced to resign by a popular uprising in 2003.

The reforms of the MNR in the revolutions of 1952 and 1982 made possible the growth and consolidation of Indian political power that now begins to eclipse the MNR. During the past decade, two Indian leaders have become especially prominent, both Aymara. They are Felipe Quispe, known as "El Mallku", a member of Parliament and leader of a significant party whose power base is the Aymara

farmers of the Altiplano (especially north of the capital around the cities of Achacachi and Sorata and the towns of Warisata and Pucarani); and Evo Morales, also a member of Parliament and leader of another significant political party, the Movement Toward Socialism (MAS), whose power base is the unions, (particularly the miners and coca growers). Quispe and Morales are often political opponents, particularly when seeking the allegiance of residents of El Alto, the sprawling burgeoning city of 800,000 on the Altiplano just above La Paz, where recent events have revealed a third powerful Indian political force, FEJUVE. What all three have in common is a determination that Indian interest not be swept aside by political and economic policies. There has been an overwhelming support for this common element among the Indians, particularly

Sánchez de Lozada ordered the military to escort oil trucks into the city on October 12, 2003, there was a clash in the indigenous city of El Alto, resulting in 3 dozen deaths. This action infuriated the whole country, and during the following week half a dozen cities were on strike demanding the resignation of Sánchez, which duly occurred on Friday, October 17.

Felipe Quispe had initiated the blockades of 2003, demanding revision of the contracts for exploitation of gas reserves by international consortiums, but what led to the massive protest was the shedding of Indian blood in El Alto. I witnessed marches and demonstrations throughout that week, and on the third and fourth days I felt confident enough to go out and watch from the side of the street, since the marches were well disciplined and entirely peaceful. The insistent demand at the time

The third Bolivian revolution will have to be a revolution of the left, leading to more power to the Indians, less poverty and oppression, and less exploitation by foreign corporations. It is not likely to be popular in Washington.

among the Aymara, even though there has been some questioning of specific demands and specific tactics.

The chief tactic, invented by Quispe, at least in its application to politics in Bolivia, has been roadblocks. These roadblocks are simple low-tech affairs, consisting of rocks across the main highways. The Indians who put up these roadblocks visit them on a daily basis and confront soldiers or anyone who attempts to remove them. Quispe initiated roadblocks early in 2003 on the roads north of La Paz, cutting the road from La Paz through Achacachi (an often restless Aymara city on the Altiplano) to Sorata, a center for trekking and other tourism at the foot of Mt. Illampu, northern anchor of the Cordillera Royal. The isolation of Sorata prompted the government to evacuate tourists by means of military helicopters, resulting in a skirmish in which some dozen Indians were killed. These deaths led to increasing Aymara support, including that of Morales, for Quispe's blockades, which deprived the capital city of La Paz of fuel and other supplies. When President Gonzalo

was for the resignation of the President, and hence the immediate crisis was easy to resolve. The underlying crisis did not however disappear. The Indians have a strong sense of foreigners having repeatedly come to Bolivia to take away their riches and leave them nothing. For two centuries, Bolivia was the main source for Europe's silver and more than 100,000 Indians and Africans died in the rich mines at Potosí, which in the seventeenth century was the largest and richest city in the Americas in spite of being at an altitude of over 15,000 feet. After silver, it was guano, which Chile took along with Bolivia's coastline. And then it was tin. Now that Bolivia has been found to possess the second largest reserve of natural gas in South America, the Indians are determined that this resource not be taken away as in the past, with no benefit to themselves. This determination is without a doubt a result of the awakening that began with the revolution of 1952.

THE DEMANDS OF 2005

The specific demands with which the

Bolivian Parliament is confronted at the beginning of June are complex and in part contradictory. There are three specific demands, two of them presented by the Indians of western Bolivia, and one by the entrepreneurs of eastern Bolivia. The two demands from western Bolivia are from the Indians. One is that the hydrocarbon resources of the country be nationalized, with a view to their exploitation by Bolivia rather than an international consortium. The other is for a Constitutional convention, aimed at increasing and institutionalizing the role of Indians in the government of Bolivia, and hence also in the determination of policies pertaining to natural gas reserves and other resources. The third demand comes from the entrepreneurial class around the city of Santa Cruz. It calls for greater autonomy for the departments (states) of Bolivia, with a view to keeping the economic prosperity of Santa Cruz in that area rather than sharing it with the Indians on the Altiplano. Not surprisingly, Quispe, Morales, and FEJUVE are pressing the first two demands and opposing the third.

My involvement with Bolivia over the past six years has been primarily with Bolivian Quakers, nearly all 40,000 of whom are Aymara. I know some Bolivian Quakers who are middle class, including one who is an M.D. and works for U.S. AID on the control of infectious diseases, one who was Undersecretary of Education in a previous government, and some professionals such as teachers and architects. For the professionals an income of six or eight hundred dollars a month is very good. Most of the Quakers I know, and the vast majority in Bolivia, hardly make that amount in a year. I have helped arrange higher education (post-secondary) scholarships for Bolivian Quakers, and their applications more often than not reveal that their parents' income is less than the meager scholarship of fifty dollars per month. Generally, the family home is in the country on the Altiplano with subsistence farming, and the house has no electricity, no heat, no running water, and dirt floors. Vast numbers of these peasants are moving into cities, very often to get a better education and more economic opportunity, but unemployment is widespread, underemployment is virtually universal, and poverty is extreme. This is the background for the Indian demands that are making today's headlines and preparing the way for a third revolution.

There are significant differences between the Indian demands of 2003, and those of 2005. In 2003 there was no realistic prospect that the departure of President Sánchez would result in greater economic well-being or institutional power for the Indians. It was certain that he would be replaced by another member of the elite, as indeed happened. In 2005, the demands are specifically aimed at improving economic well-being and strengthening the institutional power of the Indians. Hence the demands of 2005 are far more difficult to achieve, partly because they involve working out a host of details and partly because the elite (including the new entrepreneurs in Santa Cruz) have more to lose this time. Another difference is that

Bolivia has been found to possess the second largest reserve of natural gas in South America. The Indians are determined that this resource not be stolen.

the marches and demonstrations of 2003 were generally nonviolent, and almost completely so after the first day. In 2005, there have been more incidents of violence and more threats of violence. Demonstrators have broken the windshields of buses and taxis that tried to operate during the final days of May and the first days of June, peaceful Aymara marchers were attacked with clubs and stones in Santa Cruz last week, and there have been threats of taking over the Parliament or burning it down. The combination of the vast difficulty of achieving the demands and the increased threat of violence makes the situation in 2005 more ominous than that of 2003, as well as more important for the future of Bolivia.

The demands from eastern Bolivia for more Departmental autonomy (roughly, more States' rights), which are not Indian demands at all, add a complication that is difficult to assess. As

with the other demands, the details make a great deal of difference, for autonomy can mean many different things. Furthermore, the specific tactics that might be used are uncertain. Altogether missing from the demands so far described are the interests of those in southern Bolivia, around Tarija, where the gas reserves are located and where the populace has benefited economically from the investments of the foreign oil companies. Tarija might be inclined to support the demands for autonomy from Santa Cruz, but so far has not mounted any well-publicized campaign along that line.

The two great needs of Bolivia at the present time are for more power and respect for the native peoples and more economic activity that benefits the whole country. How to integrate those two requirements is and will remain an enormous challenge, if such occurs, will constitute the third Bolivian revolution. Like the first two, it will have to be a revolution of the left, leading to more power to the Indians, less poverty and oppression, and less exploitation by foreign corporations. It is not likely to be popular in Washington. CP

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claim that he is not mentally competent to face trial. In the end, Alzheimer's is the next-to-last refuge of assassins.

Lucas was overthrown by a junta of younger army officers who thrust Efraín Ríos Montt, the provost of the National Military College, into high office. Ríos Montt, the first Evangelical to assume dictatorial powers in Latin America (he was the director of the Church of the Word, founded in Eureka, California), ran a reign of terror that surpassed even that of his predecessor. Ears were cut and tongues yanked out, and townspeople burnt up, trapped inside the local churches as Ríos Montt's death squads, under the baton of General Hector Gramajo, himself a fugitive from U.S. justice, mounted a scorched earth policy against rebel villages in the Indian highlands that drove 200,000 refugees into southern Mexico. Ríos Montt was overthrown in 1983 by still another military junta headed by General Oscar Humberto García Vitores, but his legacy lives on.

Once a pal of Ronald Reagan, Ríos Montt continues to play a sinister hand in Guatemalan politics - his extraordinarily corrupt proxy Alfonso Portillo was president until last year, and although he himself finished a dismal fourth in presidential elections won by right-wing former Guatemala City mayor Oscar Berger, his clout, particularly with the born-again in Washington, was made abundantly clear at his daughter's recent lavish wedding in Antigua to U.S. Christian right Republican

Jerry Weiler of Illinois. Despite Ríos Montt's blood-smeared dossier, US Ambassador John Hamilton was a member of the wedding party.

The Guatemalan-Mexican border is porous. Hundreds of thousands of economic refugees pour across the divide each year, the flood increasing as it did in the 70s and 80s when repression troubles the south. Indeed, many of those who sought refuge in Mexico back then continue to perambulate back and forth across the border, and Rigoberta herself lives in both countries.

But with those who come here seeking sanctuary from the storm also swarm the scoundrels and Alvarez Ruiz is not the only one. Ex-president Portillo who once killed two citizens in a Chilpancingo Guerrero bar fight, from which he was sprung on grounds of self-defense by a squad of lawyers, and who is now under investigation in Guatemala for multi-million dollar transfers out of the country during his administration, is holed up in a well-guarded condominium in the swank Polanco district of the capitol, and even reportedly counts with official Mexican government permission to work while he is in residence here.

Like Portillo, Alvarez had no problem in obtaining legal immigration status in Mexico. Having fled Guatemala with the fall of his boss Lucas Garcia, Alvarez is thought to have enjoyed U.S. protection--and some say that he lived in the U.S. for a period. The former interior minister obtained legal status here

in 1989, apparently through the good offices of then-interior minister Fernando Gutierrez Barrio, one of the nation's most notorious security chieftains who ten years earlier had actively collaborated with Donaldo Alvarez to hunt down subversives in a Latin America dominated by anti-communist regimes subsidized by Washington--in Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil, Nicaragua, and El Salvador. The triumph of the Sandinistas against Somoza in 1979 and the stiff resistance of the guerrillas in Salvador, sounded the alarm and unleashed the death squads across the region.

Tipped off by Madrid or Mexico City or Washington, Donaldo Alvarez Ruiz remains at large despite attempts by Mexican authorities to locate him and an outstanding Interpol arrest warrant.

If he is run to ground, he will join a small, select group of aging mass murderers - former Mexican president Luis Echeverria, thought responsible for student massacres here, is one - who are battling their accusers for the right to die at home in a soft bed rather than a cold prison cell. In Mexico, at least, they have little to fear. The law allows all accused senior citizens to serve their time at home.

When the Indian women of Quiche heard the news of Alaide Foppa's disappearance, so the story goes, they embroidered humming birds on their *huipiles* in mourning, a traditional ritual to remember their lost warriors. They say they are wearing them yet. CP

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